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MARKETING ACTIVITIES



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This study of changes in the wholesale business of commercial flower growers marks the first economic research undertaken by USDA for a specialized but important field of agriculture. Mr. Fossum, who heads up the work, is with the Marketing Organization and Costs Branch, AMS.

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A preliminary report on methods and equipment for handling frozen food in retail stores which indicates that substantial savings in time and labor are possible. Mr. Anderson, Transportation and Facilities Branch, AMS, has made other studies of food handling efficiencies.

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A digest of marketing service programs, by commodities, drawn up by State marketing officials.

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✓ Matched-Fund Services

Planned At Conference

✓
By Forest Hall

A program aimed at increasing returns to producers and improving the efficiency of marketing farm commodities--through product quality improvement and maintenance, adequate crop and sales information, new and more stable sales outlets, and other improved marketing services - was mapped out by representatives of State agricultural marketing agencies at a recent conference with U. S. Department of Agriculture officials.

The four-day, workshop-type conference was held late in November in Louisville, Ky., to outline work which State agencies will carry out, on a "matched-fund" basis, under Agricultural Marketing Act provisions for joint Federal-State marketing service projects. It was attended by representatives of departments of agriculture or other marketing agencies from 28 States and Puerto Rico.

State Officials Program Services

Nine working groups of the State agricultural officials, assisted by USDA consultants, drafted marketing service plans for dairy products, cotton, grain, livestock, tobacco, deciduous fruits and tree nuts, vegetables, potatoes, and poultry and eggs.

Several speakers from USDA and State agencies discussed such topics as future plans for matched-fund programs, why a complete, "well-rounded" program for the work is necessary, and several specific marketing service problems that need attention.

Oris V. Wells, newly appointed administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, emphasized the importance of cooperative relations between USDA and the State departments of agriculture and marketing agencies adding: "We shall endeavor not only to maintain cooperative relations with the State departments, but also to find ways to increase both the amount and effectiveness of such cooperative work." He revealed that USDA recommended that funds for the Federal-State, cooperative matched-fund projects be earmarked as a separate item in the Department's appropriation for the new fiscal year.

The AMS administrator also outlined principles followed in the recent reorganization of USDA, calling attention to the fact that one of the first and chief goals in setting up AMS was to make sure that the Department's relations with State organizations, and its services to farmers and those handling farm products, would go forward without a break.

The conference was opened by its chairman, Ben S. Adams, Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, who welcomed the delegates to the State and assured them of its hospitality. Greetings from the College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky, were extended by Dean Frank J. Welch, who emphasized the importance of developing research and education in marketing service to assist in meeting marketing problems.

William C. Crow, Chief, Transportation and Facilities Branch, AMS, pointed out that much useful work has been done in a number of States under matched-fund marketing service projects, but that a well-rounded national program is now needed. At a later session, Mr. Crow covered the purpose of the AMAct, some of the problems that have arisen in attempts to develop a marketing service program under it, and what was done to meet them.

Dr. Barnard Joy, Assistant to the Administrator, Agricultural Research Service, explained the operation of the conference commodity groups which were set up to develop marketing service plans. He emphasized the importance of a program statement for each recommendation that would clearly indicate the marketing problem that was to be solved by the proposed expansion of marketing service activities.

State Officials Cite Needed Service Work

John G. McNeely, Professor of Agricultural Economics, Texas A. and M. College, recommended that State departments of agriculture consider procedures for studying, advising, and even regulating livestock auction locations, because small and poorly located auctions usually lack the proper number of livestock and buyers to make a competitive market.

L. Y. Ballentine, Commissioner, North Carolina Department of Agriculture, and Chairman, USDA Advisory Committee on Cooperative Work under AMAct with State departments of agriculture, spoke on the role of research, service and education in the solution of marketing problems. He discussed a number of important fields for State marketing service work and called upon the State agencies to cooperate in supporting the Federal-State, matched-fund, marketing service program.

Summarizing the results of the conferences, Roy W. Lennartson, Deputy Administrator, Marketing Services, AMS, commended those attending the workshop for their excellent cooperation and the development of an outstanding program.

The Deputy Administrator added that he felt that results of the conference would be lasting. He said that a National Marketing Workshop, including representatives of Experiment Stations, Extension Services, and State departments of agriculture, such as was held in California last summer, is being planned for 1954. Mr. Lennartson considered such a meeting extremely appropriate. Such joint conferences are essential to assure that the maximum contributions of the agencies are made in the field of marketing as a whole, he explained.

Highlights of the marketing service plans proposed by the various commodity groups at the Louisville workshop begin on page 14.

✓ Flower Wholesaling Trends

By Truman Fossum

There is a specialized field of agriculture with an average annual business of \$1.5 billion that is practically unknown even to those persons whose primary field of interest is farm marketing. This situation exists even though it is an industry furnishing employment to over 250,000 persons and accounting for annual cash receipts exceeding those for any one of such better known crops as potatoes, apples, oranges, wool, and sheep and lambs. It is the horticultural specialties industry - the commercial production and sale of flowers, shrubs, trees, and related products. The industry has two major branches; floriculture, field and greenhouse grown crops used for decoration or personal adornment and ornamental horticulture, plants, shrubs, bulbs, and trees, intended for replanting outdoors. Herbaceous plants fall into both branches. Perennials, generally grown in nurseries, are considered ornamental horticulture, whereas the annuals, grown for replanting, most often are regarded as floriculture. The entire industry is a fairly modern addition to American agriculture. Biological research in both branches developed largely during the past 25 years and economic and statistical research has come along only within the last 10 years. In the newly organized Agricultural Marketing Service of USDA economic research for the industry has been provided under the Special Crops Section, Marketing Organization and Costs Branch. Below is the first of a series of preliminary studies covering marketing methods and practices of one phase of the industry. It is the first time such information has been compiled.

Commercial growers of flowers who market their crops wholesale tripled the value of their business over the years from 1940 through 1952. During the same period they were making gradual but definite changes in their methods of doing business.

These trends have been revealed in a study of marketing methods and practices of flower growers in the United States. The study was set up to assemble and analyze for the first time information concerning types of market outlets, sales, commodities, and kinds of transportation used by commercial flower growers. It was confined to analysis of the wholesale business of these growers. Similar studies are in progress for (1) nurserymen (including bulb growers) and (2) wholesale merchants. Preliminary reports on these other branches of the horticultural specialties industry will be released as the analyses are completed.

Sales

The study showed that commercial flower growers who sold their crops wholesale did 95 percent of their business through that form of marketing. Moreover, since 1940 there has been a slight but consistent decrease in these growers' retail sales. Value of their wholesale business

increased 100 percent between 1940 and 1945 and another 50 percent between 1945 and 1952. Thus, over the period covered by the study it was up 200 percent.

Commodities

An apparent, though not too marked, trend toward specialization in the propagation of the various types of commodities produced by commercial flower growers was evident from the study. This was most apparent in planting stock, greenhouse cut flowers and greenhouse potted plants. (See table, page 7.) For instance, in 1940 planting stock accounted for slightly over 5 percent of the total distribution of reporting growers while in 1952 it had risen to nearly 8 percent. Greenhouse cut flowers dropped from 58.7 percent of total distribution in 1940 to 52 percent in 1952, while, over the same period, greenhouse potted plants increased from 21.1 to 24.6 percent of distribution. On the basis of sales, outdoor crops have not increased as much as might be indicated by quantities appearing on the market. However, data available did not include adequate representation of California outdoor growers. Much of their information is reported by shippers who were not included in the analysis.

Wholesale Outlets

Since 1940, retail florists have consistently taken approximately half of the wholesale marketings of growers. The percentage of sales made to wholesale merchants, including commission houses, increased slightly between 1940 and 1945, but since then there has been a decrease. The increase in sales of growers to wholesale dealers is attributed partially to the trend toward specialized propagation shown in the commodity analysis above. From 1940 through 1945, growers' sales to department and variety stores and supermarkets amounted to 2.5 percent of the total whereas, by 1952, the comparable amount was 5 percent. (More detail in table at end.)

Transportation

The percentage of commercial growers owning their trucks and those leasing and hiring trucks to transport their products increased somewhat over the period from 1940 through 1952, whereas the percentage of growers using trucking company facilities declined a bit. There were slight increases in the use of rail freight, parcel post and bus transportation in the distribution of products, but the percentage of growers using rail express dropped from more than 40 percent in 1940 to less than 35 percent in 1952. Use of air transportation rose from about 2.5 percent to 7 percent over the same period. (More detail on this in table on page 7.)

This first study of economic trends in the horticultural specialties industry is based on information from growers who represent one-third of the establishments and one-half the total sales of those in the industry doing wholesale business. The planned series of preliminary reports for florists, nurserymen (bulb growers) and wholesalers will make additional necessary data available. A final report will provide detailed data and analysis for all significant classifications of the industry.

Floriculture: Growers reporting and value of wholesale business, by commodities, wholesale outlets, and kind of transportation, specified years, 1940-52

Commodity

Item	1940		1945		1950		1952	
	Re- ports	Value	Re- ports	Value	Re- ports	Value	Re- ports	Value
	Num- ber	1000	Num- ber	1000	Num- ber	1000	Num- ber	1000
Planting stock	40	900	5.1	40	1,468	4.3	52	2,493
Cut flowers, greenhouse	130	10,276	58.7	141	20,911	60.9	155	24,612
Potted plants, greenhouse	77	3,699	21.1	79	6,980	20.3	98	10,661
Cut flowers and greens, outdoors	40	2,233	12.7	51	4,311	12.6	61	6,015
Perennial herbaceous plants	4	11	.1	3	22	.1	4	23
Ornamental woody plants	10	73	.4	11	172	.5	15	373
Fruit and nut trees	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	2
Small fruit plants	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	3
Other	14	327	1.9	15	452	1.3	15	494
Total wholesale business	181	17,521	100.0	194	34,318	100.0	223	44,674
	Wholesale Outlet							
Wholesale florists	132	6,714	38.3	145	13,884	40.5	167	16,273
Wholesale dealers	18	493	2.8	18	834	2.4	27	1,409
Wholesale growers	37	699	4.0	37	1,280	3.7	50	1,949
Retail florists	119	8,855	50.6	128	17,023	49.6	149	22,268
Sales yards	16	153	.9	16	160	.5	25	662
Landscape	15	71	.4	14	90	.3	23	152
Department stores	26	426	2.4	29	865	2.5	42	1,825
Mail order houses	1	1	-	3	17	-	3	88
Other	6	109	.6	9	165	.5	10	48
Total wholesale business	181	17,521	100.0	194	34,318	100.0	223	44,674
	Kind of Transportation							
Own trucks	106	6,585	37.6	116	12,835	37.4	144	17,586
Hired or Leased trucks	20	387	2.2	20	879	2.6	29	1,051
Trucking companies	58	1,769	10.1	61	3,908	11.4	74	3,747
Bus companies	30	550	3.1	35	1,341	3.9	47	1,873
Parcel post	15	62	.4	17	105	.3	23	163
Rail express	106	7,222	41.2	118	13,282	38.7	144	15,893
Rail freight	8	102	.6	9	213	.6	8	255
Air	19	451	2.6	24	1,123	3.3	62	2,969
Other	15	393	2.2	17	632	1.8	21	1,137
Total wholesale business	181	17,521	100.0	194	34,318	100.0	223	44,674

Frozen Food Handling

Efficiencies At Retail

By Dale L. Anderson

Savings in time and labor in receiving, handling and displaying frozen food for retail sale are among the most recent developments in efforts of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, to lower costs in all phases of food merchandising.

Under actual use in test stores, new handling methods and a limited amount of new equipment designed by USDA marketing specialists have boosted man-hour output in frozen food handling and display by about one-third over the conventional methods now being followed in such work. In addition, studies made by the Transportation and Facilities Branch of the Agricultural Marketing Service reveal that gains in the receiving operation can be made through improved truck delivery methods.

Savings in Receiving Start at Warehouse

Savings in labor and handling time covered in the frozen food handling study began with the loading out of delivery trucks at warehouses. Segregating the frozen food into individual store orders before loading the trucks, instead of loading by commodity and segregating the orders at the stores, greatly reduced the total time for truck loading and unloading and the store receiving time, and increased truckload capacity. By segregating individual store orders truck unloading time at the stores was reduced by about one-half. The man-hours of store personnel required in truck unloading operations dropped more than a third.

The study indicated that as much of the frozen food order as possible should be put directly into display cases to prevent double handling in and out of low temperature holding freezers. Where insulated shipping containers were used, best results were obtained by unloading and stacking them in back rooms to conserve space and prevent obstructions in the store. Proper segregation of merchandise in the store's holding freezers cut removal time there more than one-fifth.

Marking prices on frozen food is difficult because frost on the package prevents the ink from reaching the package surface. Attempts to stamp over the frost result in blurred or smeared price marks. To obtain a clear impression the frost must be wiped off each package or can.

It was found that edges of packages which were not against the outside of the cartons generally were not frosted over. By splitting cartons these unfrosted edges were exposed and the packages could be priced

before frost formed (fig. 1). To be successful, this method requires rapid price-marking. The best production resulted from the use of the porous rubber, multi-impression, stick-type stamp. Where frost-free surfaces could not be found, as in cartons of cans only one-layer deep, wiping the surface sometimes was still necessary. Use of the same solvent used for cleaning the stamps made this wiping easy and provided a good stamping surface. These improved price-marking procedures reduced pricing time more than one-third in the stores tested.



Fig. 1. Carton cut to expose unfrosted edge of packages.



Pricing unfrosted ends of cans in carton similarly cut.

Since some merchandisers objected to price marking on the end of pasteboard packages, an alternate method of stamping the upper righthand corner was studied. This was not as fast as end pricing, but still was considerably faster than conventional methods. Price markers opened the top and one side of the carton and slid its contents against a sloping board fixed to a table, providing a stepped series of packages with the right side of each exposed for pricing.

Price marking frozen food in the back room proved to have the advantages of: (1) Cutting time spent in front of the displays by approximately one-half, thus reducing a major obstruction in aisles; (2) allowing the pricing of packages before frost formed; (3) permitting work at proper heights rather than in awkward positions at the display cases; and (4) providing one place for all tools, equipment, and records. In stores where this system was used a small table, large enough to hold one case of merchandise, a stamp set, and the remainder of the equipment and records was located near the door of the low-temperature freezer. Cartons of unmarked merchandise from the freezer were placed on a cart and moved to the table where they were price marked and placed on another cart which, when fully loaded, was taken to the display cases.

A major problem in displaying frozen food is the tendency for packages and cans to slide around in the display cases. When one row of merchandise gets low, the packages adjoining it tend to fall into the hole, resulting in disorderly displays even though considerable time is spent in straightening the cases. Most display case dividers do not satisfactorily solve this problem. They require an excessive amount of display

space in the cases, and packages tend to hang up in the openings in the dividers, making it difficult to place the packages in the case and to take them out. Special dividers made of thin sheets of solid material were developed by the researchers. These were placed between all rows of merchandise but were not attached to the display case. They kept the merchandise in even rows and made the display operation much easier than formerly (fig. 2). A full set of these dividers could be placed in cases, without loss of display space, where previously only two or three of the old type had been used. Approximately two rows of merchandise, or one-half carton of merchandise, could be displayed above the divider. With this arrangement the case still appeared reasonably full even when there was room to display a full carton in each row. By displaying full cartons only and eliminating the return of part-cases to the holding freezer, damage to the packages through double handling was prevented and the display operation was greatly speeded.



Fig. 2. New type dividers as used with package display.



Even with cans, the new type dividers keep display orderly.

The manner in which the cartons were opened, in either of the two price-marking methods mentioned previously, aided in displaying the merchandise. The full cartons were put directly into the display cases and both hands of the clerk were used to transfer the contents of the cartons into their proper place in the display cases. One hand, usually the left, picked up two or three packages or cans by the end and transferred them to the other hand which placed them between the dividers, filling the row from back to front.

The use of dividers reduced man-hours of labor spent in straightening the cases by more than 50 percent. It also resulted in neater and more orderly cases. Where inventories of the items in the case were required, the dividers provided a convenient method of estimating the number of cans or packages in the case, since the clerks quickly learned the number of similar-sized items required to reach the top of the dividers. The use of split cartons, new type dividers and improved handling methods reduced the labor requirements of the display operation by more than one-third in the stores tested.

Dump displays of juice cans were also great time savers. These were usually used on high volume or "sale" items which often were not price marked. The time required to display cans by dumping was only a small fraction of that required by the conventional display methods. Not as many cans can be displayed in the same display space by dumping, but the loss in space can be compensated for by more frequent filling of displays.

Travel time from holding freezer to display cases can be reduced materially by taking maximum loads. However, an operator should not attempt to handle more cartons at one time than can be safely price marked and displayed without damage to the merchandise from defrosting. With the improved methods and by keeping the cartons stacked tightly together when out of refrigeration, 20 to 30 cartons can be handled safely.

One of the biggest time losses for most operators was in walking back and forth in front of the display cases locating the correct place to display an item. By loading the cart in the general order in which merchandise is displayed in the case, an operator can make one trip along the front of the display cases, filling them as he goes by and picking up empty cartons on the return trip, thus saving considerable travel time.

Findings Are Preliminary

Studies of the installation of all of the improved methods and equipment for the handling of frozen food resulted in increases of about one-third in man-hour production over the best conventional methods in two test supermarkets. The detailed time per carton required to perform each of the principal operations in the two supermarkets is shown in Table 1. The improved methods and equipment developed in this study are being tested in additional stores and the complete report on this study will not be published until results from these installations are known.

Table 1. -- Man-minutes per carton required for handling frozen food in two supermarkets for conventional and improved methods and equipment

OPERATION	STORE A		STORE B	
	CONVENTIONAL (MAN-MINUTES)	IMPROVED (MAN-MINUTES)	CONVENTIONAL (MAN-MINUTES)	IMPROVED (MAN-MINUTES)
Receiving	0.34	0.23	0.24	0.16
Placing in freezer . . . . .	.15	.15	.16	.12
Removing from freezer . . . . .	.33	.22	.57	.35
Price marking . . . . .	.35	.20	.32	.24
Other back room operations . . . . .	.02	.44	—	.37
Display . . . . .	.78	.49	.94	.65
Policing cases . . . . .	.12	.04	.11	.07
Other time at case . . . . .	.65	.23	.88	.30
Travel time . . . . .	.11	.09	.16	.10
Dispose of empty cartons . . . . .	.08	.08	.10	.09
Inventory and records . . . . .	.48	.44	.59	.54
TOTAL TIME PER CARTON	3.41	2.61	4.07	2.99
Personal and fatigue time . . . . .	.51	.39	.61	.45
STANDARD TIME PER CARTON	3.92	3.00	4.68	3.44
Time per carton spent at the display cases	2.50	1.38	2.95	1.46
Cartons per man-hour	15.3	20.0	12.8	17.4

Economical Egg Cooling

By Norman G. Paulhus

Americans generally have an international reputation - furthered to a considerable extent in World War II - for being able to improvise efficiently working equipment or machinery from salvage. There has been a tendency - sectionally, of course - to refer to this ability as "Yankee ingenuity." Here is an example of ingenious improvisation that saves money in the handling of eggs. But, because of its locale - Texas - it's probably better to refer to it as a bit of Confederate cleverness.

The background is this: In 1948, the U.S. Department of Agriculture with the cooperation of several State experiment stations made a survey of 900 country egg buying stations, handling an average of 6,000 cases of eggs annually.

Only about 10 percent of these plants had refrigerated cooler space. Because of this there was considerable deterioration of interior quality in the eggs they handled. The study showed that during the spring and summer months 10 eggs out of each 100 passing through these buying stations dropped out of Grade A. It was estimated that this meant an economic loss of \$28.30 for each 100 cases of eggs handled in terms of 1948 prices. The report on the study stressed that this loss could not be reduced unless adequate facilities were provided for properly handling eggs.

While it is generally accepted that refrigerated cooling is necessary at all stages of egg marketing if quality is to be maintained during warm weather, some plant operators have felt that installation of a cooler would be too costly in comparison to added returns from higher quality eggs. There are instances, however, where managers of egg buying stations have improvised small handmade coolers which have enabled them to maintain quality and sell their eggs at higher prices.

During the course of a study of egg marketing facilities made in Texas by USDA personnel with the cooperation of Floyd Z. Beanblossom, poultry marketing specialist, Texas A and M College, an excellent example of such an installation was observed.

In this particular buying station, the manager had purchased for \$100 a used incubator with inside dimensions of 9-1/2 x 12-1/2 feet. He used his own personnel to dismantle, transport, and reassemble the prefabricated box in a convenient location close to the receiving area of his plant which later minimized his egg handling operations. For \$470 a local contractor installed a 1-ton capacity compressor unit on top of the incubator, thus conserving floor space and minimizing the amount of piping and wiring required.



Exterior view of incubator converted to egg cooler at total cost of less than \$600.



Interior shot showing adequate space for stacking cases 6-high except under cooler unit.

As can be seen from the illustrations above, the improvised cooler unit will hold egg cases stacked 6-high, but normally they are stowed only 4 cases high which permits handling with a two-wheel hand truck. Over 200 cases can be stored in the cooler and shipments usually are made twice a week. The unit has resulted in better returns to producers for higher graded eggs which, in turn, has increased the volume of eggs handled by the plant. The plant manager felt that this increase in business meant that the entire investment in the cooler unit would be paid off in a relatively short time.

Operating Experience Develops Other Economies

On the basis of his experience, the plant manager felt that other buying stations interested in installing used incubators probably could economize by using a smaller refrigerating unit. His operations have shown that eggs which have been properly cooled at the farm do not require much refrigeration.

For his own plant, he explained, a smaller refrigerating unit would have maintained temperatures of 50 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit without overloading the unit. His selection of refrigerating equipment was based on a maximum volume of eggs which could be handled by stacking cases 6-high in the cooler. Subsequently, he found that it was more desirable to ship eggs whenever 200 cases had accumulated rather than attempt to increase the cooler capacity by stacking higher.

What States Propose For Marketing Services

Marketing service projects, which State and Territorial marketing agency officials feel should be carried out under the "matched-fund" provisions of the Agricultural Marketing Act, were programmed at a recent conference with U.S. Department of Agriculture marketing specialists. (An article on the conference begins on page 3.) A digest of recommendations made by commodity groups at the Conference follows:

Dairy Products

Quality improvement is regarded as one of the keys to expansion of dairy product markets. Work with dairy manufacturing plant employees to encourage uniformity in grading of milk and cream to assure high quality products is recommended. Producers also should be helped with quality problems; particularly those delivering lower quality milk. Such work, already begun in several States, should be extended.

Dairy plant operators should be helped to produce quality products through use of mobile laboratories which already have proved successful in a few States. Work being done in several States on continuous surveys of quality of dairy products in retail stores, which is helpful in detecting the causes of deterioration and their elimination, should be expanded.

Data on utilization and prices of milk for various products should be collected as a guide to assure that the largest feasible quantity of milk is used for the highest-value purposes, and that surpluses above fluid requirements are absorbed efficiently into processing channels.

Studies have shown that lower costs can be achieved in many dairy plants. Technicians should be provided to assist plant managers in making improvements. Similar work is needed to cut the costs of hauling milk from farm to dairy and to improve efficiency of cream collection.

Research has developed some principles for the proper selection and location of milk vending machines which should result in their wider use to increase milk sales. Milk distributors, particularly the smaller ones, should be advised of the colors, designs, and types of containers that are most effective in increasing sales.

Disposal of dairy plant waste is difficult and expensive. Marketing specialists can help by advising plant operators in choosing waste disposal equipment best suited to their needs or in arranging for sharing the cost of sewage disposal facilities.

A system of training classes for handlers of dairy products, similar to those conducted for retailers and wholesalers of fresh fruits and vegetables and for poultry and egg retailers, both of which are operated under contracts with USDA, should be adopted.

Cotton

Faulty ginning methods and equipment have been found to reduce the value of cotton as much as \$20 per bale. Cleaners and driers developed to preserve seed quality, when used unskillfully, also damage the fiber. The only practical approach to the problems, sending technicians to the gins to give assistance in the proper use of the machinery, already is done in some areas and is recommended for further use.

Much cotton is still sold without relation to its grade, staple, or fiber value. Use of Government grading and market news services should be actively encouraged and growers, ginners, and buyers should be urged to attend classing schools to get a better understanding of the determination of quality and value of cotton.

Repeated sampling of bales results in extremely poor bale appearance and is unnecessary work. Mechanically sampling cotton as it goes through the gin solves these problems and does a better job. Use of this new equipment should be fostered.

Fineness of fiber--in addition to the grade and the staple length--is important in determining cotton value. A recently developed device, the micronaire, measures fiber fineness and this information should be given with grade and staple of each bale.

Improved handling equipment and methods can cut costs of handling baled cotton at warehouses millions of dollars a year. At some warehouses, labor costs can be cut in half. Marketing specialists should encourage adoption of these efficiencies.

Grain

Installation of improved facilities for drying, storing and handling grains needs to be encouraged, particularly in grain-deficit States. A North Carolina study showing ways to reduce deterioration losses and handling costs should help in this. Extra value of high protein and better milling varieties of wheat is well recognized in the industry, but farmers who produce these grains seldom benefit since it is difficult for them to measure these qualities. Laboratories should be established in wheat-growing areas to enable producers to learn the quality of their wheat and to obtain prices based on that quality. Similar laboratories are needed to measure the oil content of soybeans.

Lack of knowledge of the availability of storage space often results in unnecessary hauling and in spoilage of grain stored in the open. Surveys of available space, just before and during harvest, would help to reduce these losses in all grain-growing States.

Wider use of grain grading should be encouraged, with training provided for producers and handlers. Local market news on grain is needed in some areas to eliminate price variations for the same quality of grain at local markets near each other. Experimental market news services should be tested to find the best and most economical methods.

Livestock

Livestock producers in many areas need more efficiently organized and properly conducted sales, to which they can consign stock for sale on a graded basis with assurance that the volume of stock offered will be sufficient to attract enough buyers to make a good market. State departments of agriculture could help by scheduling auction sales and arranging for consignments by producers; by grouping livestock into merchantable lots; and by giving wide publicity to sales and numbers and quality of stock to be sold. Guidance should be given local markets in the installation and use of efficient facilities and sanitation, weighing, handling, buying, and selling practices.

Several States are helping producers use grading and marketing information. This service should be extended. For guidance of producers and buyers current market information should be posted at local auction markets and additional market information is recommended.

Tobacco

Tobacco growers could increase their returns by more careful handling and better preparation of their product for market. Many lack the facilities, particularly proper lighting, to do a satisfactory job of sorting and packing. Proper facilities and methods should be demonstrated to growers. Because tobacco often is improperly handled and displayed at auction markets, growers do not receive proper prices. Good spacing between baskets, so that the tobacco can be inspected and appraised properly, and good lighting should be encouraged.

Pilot projects should be set up to develop the best methods of providing growers information on prices and other market conditions, needed, but not now available. Farmers should be encouraged to join together to provide needed marketing services, particularly small farmers in limited areas. Cooperation by all segments in the tobacco trade has been obtained in some States, through committees of growers, warehousemen, dealers and processors, and it is needed in others.

Deciduous Fruits and Tree Nuts

Since consumers prefer peaches riper than usually available, growers and shippers should be helped to develop picking and packing of more mature fruit, more uniform packs, precooling to maintain quality, and types of containers and packing methods that preserve quality.

Apple growers, particularly smaller ones, often are penalized in the market for poor grading and packing. They should be helped to adopt better grading and packing methods, to improve the overall efficiency of methods and equipment, and to adopt efficient types of containers that will maintain fruit quality.

Usual methods of packing soft fruits such as cherries, plums and pears are expensive and in many instances do not properly protect quality. Shippers should be advised of the best container types, packing methods, and, particularly, recent improvements.

Buildings, storage facilities and handling equipment at many terminal markets are inefficient and antiquated. Resulting high costs and quality deterioration are costly to growers and shippers of perishables. State marketing specialists should assist in the development of better facilities and methods of terminal market receivers. Retailers also should be encouraged to adopt methods of handling, displaying, and merchandising that maintain the original high quality of perishables.

Surveys of marketing practices and channels have proved valuable in several instances as guides in expansion of markets for deciduous fruits and tree nuts. Information on trade acceptance of various types of products, packaged in different ways, and moving through different channels, has been helpful in expanding sales. More of these surveys should be made. Potential buyers should be advised of the location and the time of availability of crops to help move them without shortages or waste from local surpluses.

More States should survey the number of fruit trees of different varieties and ages that are being removed, planted, or coming into production. Similar information is needed for berry crops. Such basic data are helpful in estimating future supplies, will aid orderly marketing, and guide growers in new plantings.

Experimental market news services are needed to establish methods of providing additional types of information on current marketings of fruits. Potential buyers, such as truckers and terminal market operators, should be advised of prices and quantities of fruits ready for harvest in specific localities. Consumers also should be kept advised of plentiful supplies of fruits at harvest time, through newspapers, radio, television, and other channels. Improved procedures for certifying fruit tree nursery stock as free of viruses are needed. Started in a few States, this work should be expanded.

Vegetables

To improve and maintain quality, State departments, of agriculture and other agencies should cooperate in demonstrations of proper packing, packaging, and handling of vegetables in fields and at packing sheds. This work should emphasize correct application of grade standards, use of better containers, and the value of special labels or brands to indicate quality. Growers, shippers, and wholesalers should be aided in improving and expanding prepackaging of many vegetables.

Periodic reports covering harvest period, time of peak harvesting, estimated volume, and sources for additional information are needed to advise potential buyers of the availability and location of supplies of vegetables in many producing areas.

Because more than half of the vegetable shipments east of the Rocky Mountains now move by truck, information is needed on volume of this movement, in addition to available reports on rail shipments. Experimental market news services should be established in some areas where it is not now available for important vegetable crops.

Locally plentiful supplies of vegetables could be moved into consumption, and market outlets thus expanded, by assisting growers and shippers in locating and supplying processing plants, institutions, and other markets outside the normal distribution channels.

Potatoes

Growers and shippers need assistance in the proper interpretation and application of potato grades and standards. They should be encouraged to adopt the sizes and types of packages that consumers want, marked to inform consumers adequately about quality, and to handle potatoes so as to reduce deterioration in marketing channels. They should also have technical assistance in the installation and use of equipment for cleaning, precooling, packaging, and treating potatoes to reduce quality deterioration and losses through decay.

Additional market information is needed on production, distribution, and prices, in the interest of orderly marketing. Adequate information on the location and time of availability of supplies locally should be furnished to help to move more of the crop into consumption within the State of origin. Producers and shippers of late potatoes need separate production estimates on their part of the crop as a guide in planning marketings during the late fall, winter, and spring. Arrangements should be made for the cooperation of the States involved to develop a useful service.

Poultry and Eggs

Basic information, including data on sources of eggs for hatching, hatchery production, farm production of the various types of poultry products, processing capacity, and processing practices, is needed by the poultry industry to measure the changes taking place in production and marketing. Information on prices and market movement of poultry products in production areas also is needed.

Concentration in limited production areas of certain poultry products, such as broilers and turkeys, and rapid improvements in processing methods have created a need for information and demonstrations of these new practices, particularly the advantages of in-plant chlorination, new scalding techniques, and improved methods of chilling, freezing, and packaging of poultry. Plants using these practices need to be shown how to use them to the best advantage and others need assistance in developing most efficient plant layouts.

Maintenance of quality of eggs and other poultry products is an outstanding problem and much service work is needed to assist the industry in reducing deterioration and handling losses, in use of better packages and packaging methods, in identifying the size and grade of the product for the information of the consumer, and in assisting retailers to utilize improved display and merchandising methods. Service agencies might well foster wider utilization of merchandising methods that have been taught by the Poultry and Egg National Board under contract with USDA.

Marketing Briefs

(The program announcements summarized below are more completely covered in press releases which may be obtained on request from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. by citing the code number given at the end of each item.)

Cotton.--Preliminary returns showed that growers of both upland and extra long staple cotton approved marketing quotas for 1954 crops in the referendums held December 15. State-by-State returns are shown. (3074) ... CCC sells 413,391 pounds of Kenaf fiber (jute substitute). (89).

Dairy.--Sales of USDA stocks of DRY MILK and BUTTER announced. (107 and 23). USDA offers BUTTER for sale for use as cocoa butter substitute. (3155). Action was taken on the following milk marketing orders: KANSAS CITY, (3113); NEOSHO VALLEY, (86); ST. LOUIS, (66); DAYTON-SPRINGFIELD, (3187); LOUISVILLE, (6); NEW YORK, (3053); the five NEW ENGLAND orders, (115); PHILADELPHIA, (3113 and 67); TOLEDO, (3202 and 3164); STARK COUNTY, Ohio, (5 and 27); TRI-STATE, (3186); CINCINNATI, (3121); COLUMBUS, (95); NORTH TEXAS, (67); CENTRAL WEST TEXAS, (3175); SAN ANTONIO, (3083, 3162, 7, and 95); PUGET SOUND, (3163); and NEW ORLEANS, (7).

Fats and Oils.--USDA authorizes CASTOR BEAN procurement program for 1954. (3093)... USDA buys 10,048,000 pounds of LARD for export. (68).

Fruits and Vegetables.--New U. S. Standards for BRUSSELS SPROUTS. (3067). Consumer standards proposed for fresh PARSNIPS. (3167). Revision of U. S. grade standards have been proposed for: FROZEN MIXED VEGETABLES, (83); SHELLED ENGLISH WALNUTS, (3068); POTATOES, (3128); CANNED PEAS, (3172); GREEN CORN, (3173); and FROZEN BEANS, (117). USDA has amended drained weights for Grade A CANNED GRAPEFRUIT, (108). Action was taken on the following market agreement programs: DRIED PRUNES, (3174); TOKAY GRAPES, (98); and FIIBERTS, (24). USDA purchases included: Concentrated ORANGE JUICE, (3135); SHELLED PECANS, (3115); WINTER PEARS, (3152) and (69).

Grain.--USDA announced there will be no marketing quotas and no acreage allotments on the 1954 RICE crop. (3177). Marketing quotas have been approved by PEANUT growers for the 1954, 55 and 56 crops. (3071). Final payment date for CCC loans on 1953-crop grains and related commodities have been announced. (3147).

Sugar.--Price determinations for 1954-crop sugar in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have been announced. (3179). Minimum wages for the 1954 sugar beet crop have been set for California and nearby areas. (3058).

Tobacco.--Final results of referendums held among growers of various types of tobacco on marketing quotas have been announced. (3057).

Wool.--USDA has issued a statement designed to clarify provisions of the 1954 price support program for wool. (3197).

ABOUT MARKETING

The following addresses and publications, issued recently, may be obtained upon request. To order, check on this page the publications desired, detach and mail to the Agricultural Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

Publications:

Report of the President of the Commodity Credit Corporation - 1953. 16 pp. (USDA) (Printed)

Report of the Administrator of the Production and Marketing Administration - 1953. 112 pp. (USDA) (Printed)

Fiber and Spinning Test Results for Some Varieties of Cotton Grown by Selected Cotton Improvement Groups, Crop of 1953 (Supplement No. 5). December 1953. 13 pp. (AMS) (Processed)

Cotton Quality Statistics, United States, 1952-53. Statistical Bulletin No. 137. January 1954. 64 pp. (AMS) (Printed)

Directory (Names and Addresses of Personnel Who May be Contacted for Grading and/or Inspection Service on: Poultry and Egg Products and Domestic Rabbits). January 1954. 9 pp. (AMS) (Processed)

U. S. Standards for Brussels Sprouts. January 18, 1954. 2 pp. (AMS) (Processed)

U. S. Standards for Grades of Canned Grapefruit (Effective November 25, 1952 and as amended January 19, 1954). January 13, 1954. 12 pp. (AMS) (Processed)

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